

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 QUEBEC 00164 202143Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 DHA-02 /060 W
-----210433Z 032284 /72

R 202133Z APR 77
FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 971
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMCONSUL TORONTO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE QUEBEC 0164

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJECT: UNION NATIONALE CHANGES LANGUAGE POLICY

1. QUEBEC'S UNION NATIONALE PARTY HAS SCRAPPED ITS FREEDOM OF CHOICE POLICY ON LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION AND HAS ANNOUNCED A PLATFORM THAT WOULD SEND ALL NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING IMMIGRANTS TO FRENCH SCHOOLS. WITH THIS REVERSAL OF PARTY'S LANGUAGE POLICY AS EXPLAINED IN RECENT ELECTION CAMPAIGN, UN HAS OPTED IN FAVOR OF A MODIFIED VERSION OF PARTI QUEBECOIS WHITE PAPER RELEASED EARLIER THIS MONTH. PARTY LEADER RODRIGUE BIRON ANNOUNCED THE MAJOR POLICY REVISIONS AT THE END OF A STUDY SESSION HELD SATURDAY. UN POLICY WOULD STILL GIVE ENGLISH COMMUNITY A BETTER BREAK THAN THE PQ PROPOSALS WILL IF THEY ARE PASSED INTO LAW. BUT UN PLAN IS ALSO DESIGNED TO MAKE FRENCH THE PROVINCE'S "PRE-EMINENT" LANGUAGE. BIRON TOLD AUDIENCE AT PARTY CONGRESS THAT HE NOW AGREES WITH CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER THAT QUEBEC MUST BECOME AS FRENCH AS ONTARIO IS ENGLISH.

2. PRINCIPAL DEPARTURE FROM WHITE PAPER IS IN AREA OF EDUCATION. WHERE PQ WOULD LIMIT ACCESS TO ENGLISH SCHOOLS TO CHILDREN WITH
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 QUEBEC 00164 202143Z

A PARENT EDUCATED IN ENGLISH IN QUEBEC, UN PROPOSES TO OPEN SYSTEM TO ALL WHOSE MOTHER TONGUE IS ENGLISH. THIS IS BASICALLY SAME AS FORMER LIBERAL GOVERNMENT'S LANGUAGE LEGISLATION--LAW 22-- OF 1974. BIRON GAVE NO DETAILS ON HOW HE WOULD DISTINGUISH BETWEEN ANGLOPHONE AND NON-ANGLOPHONE NEWCOMERS. HE DID TELL JOURNALISTS, HOWEVER, THAT HE WOULD NOT USE THE LANGUAGE TESTS WHICH CAUSED LIBERAL'S SO MUCH TROUBLE. UN PROMISES TO RECOGNIZE HISTORIC

FACT OF ENGLISH COMMUNITY AND RESPECT ANGLOPHONES AS "AN ARTICULATE COLLECTIVITY." OTHERWISE, BIRON WENT ALONG WITH WHITE PAPER. ALTHOUGH SURPRISED BY UN POLICY DECISION, SOLE ANGLOPHONE UN DEPUTY WILLIAM SHAW SAID HE WOULD GO ALONG WITH POLICY AS IT STILL RECOGNIZES THERE SHOULD BE TWO OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN QUEBEC.

3. BIRON SAID PARTY WAS NOT CHANGING ITS MIND BUT MAKING SOME DETAILS OF ITS LANGUAGE POLICY CLEARER. NONETHELESS, NEW UN POSTURE DOES MOVE PARTY MUCH CLOSER TO PQ LANGUAGE WHITE PAPER AND LEAVES QUEBEC WITH NO POLITICAL PARTY WITH A LANGUAGE POLICY DESIGNED TO MAKE FRENCH LESS THAN PRE-EMINENT. THIS CHANGE IN UN POLICY WAS PROMULGATED BY BIRON HIMSELF AFTER A DAY OF SPEECHES REPRESENTING ALL SHADES OF OPINION ON LANGUAGE ISSUE. HOWEVER, NO VOTE OF DELEGATES WAS TAKEN AND SOME OBSERVERS FELT THAT MAJORITY ACTUALLY FAVORED CONTINUATION OF FREEDOM-OF-CHOICE POLICY RATHER THAN OPTION BIRON ANNOUNCED. BIRON'S ACTIONS WERE AT LEAST CONSISTENT WITH HIS COMMENTS IN NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WHERE HE HAD PRAISED WHITE PAPER WARMLY, CALLING ONLY FOR PROTECTION OF MINORITY RIGHTS.

4. COMMENT: BIRON AVOIDED DIFFICULT PARTY BATTLE OVER LANGUAGE POLICY BY INTERPRETING AUDIENCE OPINION ARBITRARILY IN MAKING HIS PARTY'S POLICY ALMOST AN ECHO OF WHITE PAPER EXCEPT ON STATUS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE. THIS EXCEPTION ALLOWED HIM CONTINUE ASPIRE TO HAVE SUPPORT OF ENGLISH VOTERS WHO ARE NUMBEROUS IN MANY OF 10 EASTERN TOWNSHIP RIDINGS PARTY NOW HOLDS AND DOMINANT IN SHAW'S POINTE CLAIRE RIDING. MORE AND MORE MASTER OF HIS PARTY'S MACHINERY, BIRON CONTINUES TO FOLLOW HIS SELF-PROCLAIMED NEW STYLE OF OPPOSITION WHEREBY HE APPROVES OUTWARDLY OF "GOOD" LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 QUEBEC 00164 202143Z

PQ DECISIONS AND POLICIES AND OPPOSES ONLY "BAD" ONES. NOTWITHSTANDING THE UNEASINESS OF UN OLD TIMERS OVER THIS POLICY, BIRON HOPES IT WILL INCREASE UN CREDIBILITY AMONG YOUNGER QUEBECOIS AND ALLOW UN FORM GOVERNMENT AFTER NEXT ELECTION. BIRON PRACTICED HIS NEW STYLE OF OPPOSITION SATURDAY BY CRITICIZING HARSHLY PQ BUDGET WHICH HE FEELS FAILS TO TACKLE NEED TO GET ECONOMY MOVING AGAIN. HE CHALLENGED PQ TO PUBLISH WHITE PAPER ON ECONOMIC FUTURE OF QUEBEC. WHETHER HE CAN INCREASE PARTY'S 18 PERCENT OF POPULAR VOTE BY THIS NEW STYLE REMAINS TO BE SEEN, BUT HE IS SUCCEEDING IN GIVING UN MORE POSITIVE AND AGGRESSIVE IMAGE. VICE PRIME MINISTER, JACQUE-IVAN MORIN, TOLD ME RECENTLY THAT HE EXPECTS UN TO OUTSTRIP LIBERALS IN FUTURE AND BECOME OFFICIAL OPPOSITION.

MCNAMARA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, POLITICAL PARTIES, OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 20-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977QUEBEC00164
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770138-0323
Format: TEL
From: QUEBEC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770438/aaaabgin.tel
Line Count: 111
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: c811b1a1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2748020
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UNION NATIONALE CHANGES LANGUAGE POLICY
TAGS: PINT, CA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c811b1a1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009